

SERVICE LEARNING / AK DEMOCRACY PROJECT JOINT MEETING

Governor's Conference Room, Anchorage

September 25, 2001

NOTES

In Attendance: Lt. Governor Fran Ulmer, Colleen Ward, Jo Michalski, Mary Bristol, Carl Rose, Letitia Fickel, Bob Wicker, Shannon Kempton, Dennis Arashiro, Sammy Crawford, Betty Walters, Kattaryna Stiles, Nancy Andes, Alma Alyia, Beau Bassett, Carolyn Hoover, David Baranow, , Marjorie Menzi, Judy Salo,

An overview of the AK Democracy Project was given by Marjorie Menzi.

A basic overview of the mission and work of the Alaska State Community Service Commission was given by Judy Salo.

Group members reported on their roles and civic/service learning activities.

An open discussion ensued in response to the following questions:

What is going on out there?

What is missing?

How are Civic Engagement and Service Learning interrelated?

- Lots going on in classrooms, schools, and communities throughout Alaska in both service learning and civics instruction.
- There has been an ongoing debate about requiring service learning in our schools. The general feeling of the participants was that **it is better to inspire than to require** service projects.
- There was general agreement that service learning and civic engagement go hand in hand and are both vital to a democracy.

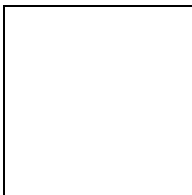
What can we do to inspire more service learning and civic engagement?

- Student generated ideas and student-led action projects are most successful.
- We can promote student leadership programs.
- Assist schools in planning.
- Promote forums for community leaders, schools, universities to discuss critical issues and how to address them through service learning.

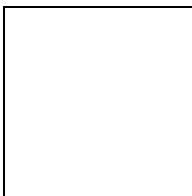
- Create a clearinghouse for best practices, service events, contacts in service learning.
- Advocate for more training for educators, students, and community members on citizenship and service learning.
- Demonstrate how service learning is successful as an instructional strategy.
- Provide funding for teams from outside of Anchorage to participate in the state Project Citizen competition.
- Work to eliminate barriers teachers feel in dealing with those outside of the education system.
- Integrate and build upon existent programs in service learning. Sustainability is critical.
- Emphasize that civic engagement & service learning are cross curricular and intergenerational.
- Connect service learning to character, citizenship, and core values.
- Use the language of literacy. Tie civics and service learning into reading, writing and math to address the focus on exit exam requirements.
- Use marketing techniques to "sell" need for service learning and citizenship skills.

How are we going to do this?

- Use the Department of Education & Early Development Info Exchange to share ideas about service learning and solicit information about best practices?
- Create an effective useful clearinghouse which includes web information on organizations and their statements of purpose. Include schematic on relationship among efforts.

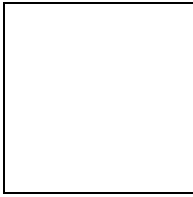


Share effective models such as the City of Kenai's grant set aside for student projects.

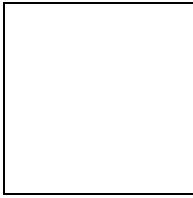


Government, as well as business, needs to be involved in partnerships. Get state officials in service learning programs. Formalize a

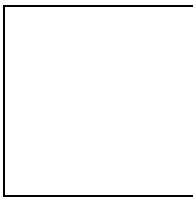
partnership with government agencies as we do with businesses. This could help raise the image of public employees.



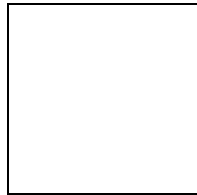
Recognition is important. Develop a citation for projects that are best practices.



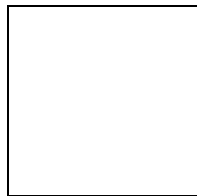
Promote modeling as everyone's responsibility.



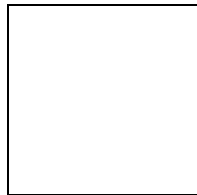
Look for opportunities to exchange information such as:



WIA – October 2-4 – Anchorage



Democracy Week – October 13-19

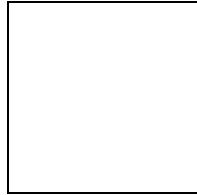


National School-Business Partnership Conference –
Anchorage -Late October

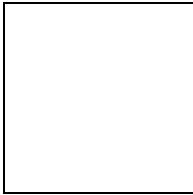


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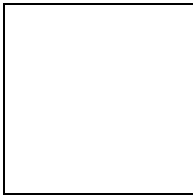
National Service Learning Conference – Seattle – March 20-



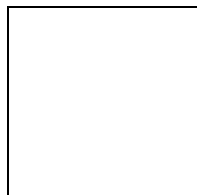
Serve Alaska – Conference on Volunteerism and Community Engagement – April 25-26



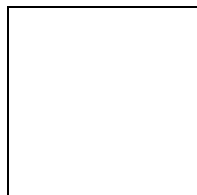
Develop a “ToolKit” to make service learning more user-friendly for busy educators. Also develop one for public employees, modeled on "School to Work" efforts, to ease anxiety related to classroom involvement.



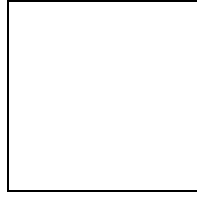
Work to get teams of leaders from school attendance areas that include students, teachers, site-based council members, community activists and others to attend the Serve Alaska conference to advance service learning and civic engagement in their communities. But, don't dictate the composition of teams—leave to local communities.



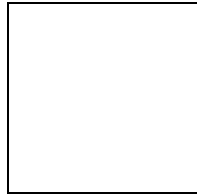
Teams should include leaders in service learning.



Information about best practices



Tightly tie service learning to democratic citizenship



Give teams times to plan for what they will do back in their
communities

Every child deserves a chance to give back. Giving back is part of good citizenship. Poor kids should not be a project for rich kids.